THE TRIBUNE.

Published by
THE TRIBUNE PRINTING CO.
A. B. KEADLE, Managing Editor.
MONTGOMERY. : : MISSOURI

THE MALINGERER.

BY BERNARD BARRY.

The long anticipated had come to pass. The opening gun had been fired—it might be said—almost accidentally, and all through the night of February 4, 1899, the land side of Manila was a semicircle of crashing Springfields and sputtering Krag-Jorgensons. Outside that semicircle the Filipinos were rapidly losing self-confidence and gaining respect for the Americans. Within it the United States troops of the reserve checked an attempt at an uprising, and waited impatiently for orders to the front. But that semicircle remained unbroken through the night.

In the cool of the morning the "flying battalion" of the First California regiment hurried along the road to El Paco to join the First brigade. At intervals, a brown face would peep through the door of one of the nipa huts as the troops passed, only to be withdrawn quickly. There was a continuous conglomeration of sound very similar to the disturbance created by any large city on Independence day. It increased in volume as the soldiers moved. The men should have been in a sober frame of mind, but they seemed to be thrilled with unholy joy, for they whistled to the effect that there would be a hot time presently, and profane witticisms were shouted from one end of the line to the other. There was an impatient acceleration of step, but the rhythmic swing of the blue sleeves and the leggined limbs would have passed muster at dress parade.

They found the brigadier and his staff on a little hillock outside of El Paco. The order their colonel received was whispered through the ranks: "Two companies to the block house on the double. Report to Col. Whalley!" The commanding officer swung his horse about and met the pleading eyes of four captains. All of them wanted the chance; but there was no time to weigh their claims.

"F and M," he said, quickly. A sharp command, emphasized by an oath, and, with a stifled cheer, two companies rushed around a bend in the road into the zone of stray bullets, just as two crashing reports that seemed to minimize the incessant rattle of the rifles announced that an American field battery had begun to clear the way for an advance. The zeu of the Mauser bullets overhead was the signal for some instinctive ducking, and a repetition of the jesting, forced and otherwise. First Sergt. Joyce, of F, was one of the humorists. "If we were 40 feet high a lot of us would be hit in the head," he remarked.

The two companies trotted up a slight incline in the road to a noisy little block house that almost hid itself in the smoke of 30 Springfields. In the shelter of the block house a surgeon and two hospital stewards were working over some "casualties." There were white faces and bloody linen bandages, and farther on some motionless forms with campaign hats covering their glazed eyes and set features, but even where the knife glittered there was no sound of complaint.

To the right of the block house was an irregular line of gray smoke-puffs where a battalion of Washington volunteers was sprawled behind a dike in the rice fields. One of them, a few yards from the road, rose suddenly and fell forward on his face. Two of his fellows lifted him quickly and, crouching close to the ground, half carried, half dragged, him to the dressing station.

The captain of F company threw aside his cigar, and turned to Joyce, who lay close beside him. His narrow eyes seemed a bit bigger, and he gnawed his gray mustache reflectively for an instant.

"Joyce," he said, sharply, "if I get it, you be good to my little girl."

"Yes, sir," said Joyce, quietly, "and if it's my turn—tell her—you know."

The field officer in command in the block house hurried out. His round face was lit with a triumphant smile. "Get ready. The artillery's got 'em going."

"Ready to move," cried the captain, and there was a tightening of straps. Haversacks were thrown wide open. The men wanted to rid themselves of their extra cartridges first.

"We'll advance by platoons. You have command of the Second—a good chance for you," said the captain to Joyce. "What's the matter?" he cried, abruptly, for Joyce's face was distorted and of a greenish hue, and he lay with his knees pressed up toward his face.

"Cramps," moaned the first sergeant, in agonized tones.

"Rush right out at command," shouted the field officer. "Get ready."

"Get up!" cried the captain, fiercely, to the sergeant. "Pull yourself together!"

"I can't," wailed the prostrate man, twisting his body, apparently in the throes of the sharpest pain.

"You dirty cur—you malingering hound!"

There was an almost imperceptible lull in the noise of the bullets.

"Forward! And give it to them!" shouted the field officer.

The captain kicked the shaking man on the ground with savage force, and echoing the command, melted into a swirling mass of blue and khaki that floundered into the rice field ahead of the Washington men, and separated swiftly into a skirmish line.

One of the men stopped for a fraction of a moment and clutched Joyce by the arm. "For God's sake, Billy, come!" he said, and dragged him a few feet toward the road. Then he desisted and rushed after his company.

Joyce dragged himself toward the surgeon, who knelt over a prostrate soldier binding a wound in the thigh. The man's trousers' leg had been cut off at the hip, leaving one sinewy limb bare. If the wound caused him pain he did not give evidence of it, for his face wore an exceedingly cheerful grin, and he remarked, every now and then: "I wouldn't care, but they spoiled my only pair of pants."

The surgeon glanced at Joyce. "Where are you hurt?" he asked, quickly.

"It's not a bullet. It's cramps," gasped Joyce, doubling up and writhing on the ground.

"It's a funny time to have cramps. You've got cold feet," snapped the surgeon.

Two men of the hospital corps stumbled across the road bearing a recumbent figure on a litter. The wounded man was spattered with mud from head to feet, and there were splashes on his white face. It was Joyce's bunkie.

The doctor tore open the blue shirt, revealing a circular wound on the left breast. He shook his head and the litter-bearers quickly deposited their burden beside the motionless figures.

"For God's sake, doctor, give me something — give me—," moaned Joyce. "I'm not faking, I tell you. I can't straighten out. For God's sake, give me a chance!"

"Here," said the doctor, contemptuously, throwing him a little cardboard box, "and shut up or I'll kick the life out of you."

There were two pills of camphor and opium in the package, and Joyce swallowed them at a gulp. For a time that agonizing pain continued to gnaw. He lay moaning and twisting about like a wounded animal. Meanwhile, the field guns were throwing shrapnel into the Filipino rifle pits, and the American line was drawing nearer and nearer Santa Ana.

Suddenly, far to the right across the rice field, a long line of skirmishers rose to their feet and doubled to flank the town. The men in the center rushed forward with a cheer, and a battalion of Idaho men, with their regimental colors at their head, clattered up to the block house from El Paco, and then hurried by it toward the town. Santa Ana was taken.

Joyce felt the pain gradually disappear. He straightened himself up with some difficulty, and was about to stagger after the Idaho men.

"Oho," said one of the hospital stewards. "Your cramps are all right now, Mr. First Sergeant. Don't be afraid, soldier man, the fighting's all over."

Joyce looked first at the outskirts of the town, then at the wounded, most of whom were grinning at him scornfully. He drew his bayonet, and, inserting the point beneath the seam of one of his first sergeant's chevrons, wrenched it from the sleeve. The one on the other arm followed its mate.

"That won't save you from hearing what the boys think of you and it won't save you from Bilibid, either," said a boy with a bandaged head from his own company.

Joyce looked at the group of faces that mocked and jibed and jeered, and then toward the Filipino town where the colors of the Idaho regiment disappeared into the bamboo hedge that girdled it. Across the rice fields came the sound of exultant cheering. A realization of the mesh of circumstances that had wound round him smote him so that he staggered. He clenched his hands till the nails tore through the skin in a fierce effort to check a burst of despair. The heat of the sun blinded him, and Joyce saw a girl's face. The eyes blazed scornful like her father's.

"Catch his arm—quick!" shouted the surgeon.

But a pistol cracked, and Joyce dropped in a shapeless heap, still clutching the smoking weapon. The surgeon quickly picked up a campaign hat and covered the face.

"Guess he wasn't faking after all," he remarked, "but it was a bad time to have cramps."—San Francisco Argonaut.

A DIFFERENCE OF LANGUAGE.

Footpad Fails to Make Literary Person Understand His Demands.

Footpad (presenting pistol)—Fork over yer rhino, and be quick about it!

Near-Sighted Editor of Literary Weekly—I beg your pardon?

(Sternly)—No monkeying! Un limber! Perduce the blunt!

"Pardon me, but I do not exactly apprehend the drift of your—"

"Cheese yer patter! Don't yer see I've goth the drop? Unload yer oof."

"I am totally at a loss, my dear sir, to perceive the relevancy of your observations or to—"

"Whack up, or I'll let her speak!"

"Is there any peculiarity in the external seeming of my apparel or demeanor sir, that impels you, a total stranger, to—"

"Once more, will yer uncork that swag?"

(Hopelessly bewildered): "My friend, I confess my utter inability to gather any coherent idea from the fragmentary observations you have imparted. There is something radically irreconcilable and incapable of correlation in the vocabularies with which we endeavor to make the reciprocal or correspondential interchange of our ideas intelligible. You will pardon me if I suggest that synchronization of purpose is equally indispensable with homogeneity of cerebral impression as well as parallelism of idiom and—"

But, says London Tit-Bits, the highwayman had fled in dismay.

The Cause of Suicide

By DR. J. G. KIERNAN.

MOST young women who are said to die from love are simply the victims of an improper diet, with perhaps the further complication coming from a lack of proper facilities in bathing.

Cut out the ice cream and the candies, eat sensibly and enough of that which is nourishing and digestible; keep clean. Then sit down on your young ego with the determination to crush the idea that you are the whole thing—and some day you may have grandchildren to spank.

In the beginning this young love of the young woman is a something akin to her adolescence. It is at this period of her life that she is especially susceptible to strong emotions. She is pessimistic for the most part, and at all times she is self-conscious and analytical of her feelings. She is in a period of her life where there is a loss of nervous energy at the best; to the extent that she suffers this she is pessimistic and moody, her ego is all prominent, and the sentimental something called love belongs to that primitive demonstration of it in man when it meant to him simply possession. There is nothing as yet which contemplates a consideration of the other party to the passion.

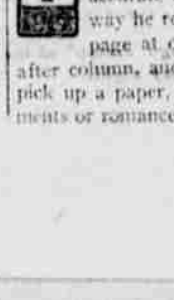
It is when in this period of introspection and, perhaps, pessimism that the young woman turns to the thought of suicide. She is debilitated and nervous, she has the impulse to self-destruction, and to the extent that she is debilitated and unable to resist the impulse, and, in like degree, to the extent that the means of self-destruction are at hand there is a likelihood of her carrying out her purpose. At the present time the universal and unrestricted sale of carbolic acid and the ease with which any one may obtain a revolver are conditions favoring suicides among the young.

With the approach of womanhood there are mental and physical changes which must be effected in all harmony. In effecting this it is essential that the bodily functions be kept as near to the normal as is possible. A proper diet for the young woman and a rational system of bathing and exercise will reconcile the two conditions with a minimum of nerve waste, leaving the subject free in greatest measure from the emotions of adolescence.

Poets Are Made, Not Born

By RICHARD BOND THOMPSON,

Illinois Poet-Humorist.



It is about time that ancient phrase "poets are born, not made," were relegated to the rear. Every poet who has conscientiously striven to produce creditable verse knows it to be as fallacious as it is beautiful.

The sooner young writers who aspire to write poetry learn that poets are not born there will be a marked decrease in the amount of doggerel which now daily finds its way to the editorial waste-basket.

Months, yea years, of diligent study and practice are necessary to produce a poet, however deeply his spirit may be imbued with the poetic feeling.

Beginners who show an aptitude in art are not expected to suddenly blossom forth into masters; neither are musicians nor authors. Yet every person who possesses a crude idea of rhyme thinks himself a poet without further preparation.

Our text books and our teaching in the public schools and colleges are surprisingly deficient in presenting the real art of versification. It is an art that can be taught, but not through the instrumentality of such vague and primer-like methods now in vogue.

The study of poetry as an art that may be acquired has a most refining and ennobling influence upon the student and the reading public is becoming more and more interested in poetical productions. Four lines of verse may often express more than a score of lines of prose.

Let some retired millionaire poet endow a school for poets, where a few really capable ones might be "made to order."

R. B. Thompson

Standing Armies Are Murderers

By COUNT LEO TOLSTOI.

THE masses are so hypnotized that, though they see what is continually going on around them, they do not understand what it means. They see the unceasing care kings, emperors and presidents bestow on disciplined armies, see the parades, reviews and maneuvers they hold, and of which they boast to one another, and the people eagerly crowd to see how their own brothers, dressed up in bright-colored, glittering clothes, are turned into machines to the sound of drums and trumpets, and who, obedient to the shouting of one man, all make the same movements; and they do not understand the meaning of it all.

If only every king, emperor and president would understand that his work of organizing armies is not an honorable and important duty, as his flatterers persuade him it is, but a most abominable business, i. e., the preparing for and the managing of murder. If only every private individual understood that the payment of taxes which helps to equip soldiers, and above all, military service, are not immaterial but highly immoral actions, by which he not only permits murder, but takes part in it himself—then this power of the kings and emperors which arouses an indignation, and for which they now get killed, would of itself come to an end.

Reforms and the Newspapers

By PROF. EDWIN ERLE SPARKS.

THE newspapers are an accurate barometer of the times, and an accurate estimate can be formed of a person's character by the way he reads a newspaper. Some men will turn to the sporting page at once, others begin at the first page and read column after column, and others go first to the financial page. A woman will pick up a paper, glance at the first page to see if there are any elopements or romances, and then turn to the woman's page.